

Message Text

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ACTION CU-03

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C O N F I D E N T I A L MADRID 0650

CU/WE FOR DAVIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, PFOR, SP
SUBJECT: PLANNED VISIT BY CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC "EQUIPO" LEADERS TO
THE U.S.

1. ANTON CANELLAS (CANYELLAS IN CATALAN), LEADER OF THE UNION DEMOCRATICA DE CATALUNA (UDC) AND "INTERNATIONAL SECRETARY" OF THE OPPOSITION CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC "EQUIPO," CALLED ON ME TODAY TO REQUEST OUR ASSISTANCE IN MAKING HIGH-LEVEL WASHINGTON APPOINTMENTS FOR A DELEGATION OF EQUIPO LEADERS WHICH PLANS TO VISIT WASHINGTON AND NEW YORK FEBRUARY 22-25. CANELLAS ANTICIPATED THAT THE DELEGATION WOULD CONSIST OF AT LEAST FOUR MEN: JOAQUIN RUIZ GIMENEZ (IZQUIERDA DEMOCRATICA), JOSE MARIA GIL ROBLES (FEDERATION POPULAR DEMOCRATICA), JUAN AJURIAGUERRA (PARTIDO NACIONALISTA VASCO), AND HIMSELF. THEY MIGHT BE JOINED BY LEADERS OF THE EQUIPO'S VALENCIAN AND GALICIAN PARTIES AS WELL.

2. THE EQUIPO'S MISSION ON THIS PLANNED TRIP IS CLEARLY TWO-FOLD: TO CONVEY TO THEIR HEARERS THEIR PERSPECTIVES ON THE SPANISH SITUATION GENERALLY AND SPANISH CHRISTIAN DEMOCRACY IN PARTICULAR, AND, LIKE OTHER POLITICAL VISITORS, TO ENGENDER MEDIA COVERAGE HERE IN SPAIN THAT WILL BE USEFUL IN THE RUN-UP TO THE ELECTIONS. FRANCESC VENDRELL, A MEMBER OF CANELLAS' PARTY ON THE
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PERMANT STAFF OF THE UN IN NEW YORK, IS HANDLING MUCH OF THE GROUP'S PROGRAM. HE ALREADY HAS BEEN IN TOUCH WITH THE COUNCIL ON FROEIGN RELATIONS AND APPARENTLY HAS ARRANGED FOR AN APPERRAANCE BY THE GROUP AT THE COUNCIL ON FEBRUARY 25. ACCORDING TO CANELLAS, VENDRELL (OFFICE PHONE 212-754-5420, HOME PHONE 212-799-0933) ALSO IS WORKING TO SET UP MEETINGS FOR THE GROUP WITH LEADERS OF THE SENATE AND HOUSE.

3. THE CD EQUIPO IS AT THIS TIME ONE OF THE TWO MOST IMPORTANT CENTRIST GROUPINGS IN SPAIN. ITS POLITICAL ASSETS INCLUDE THE FACT THAT TWO OF ITS SIX MEMBER PARTIES (FROM CATALONIA AND THE BASQUE PROVINCES) ARE REGIONALLY BASED GROUPS OF ACKNOWLEDGED IMPORTANCE, ITS LEADERS ARE WELL-KNOWN, LONGSTANDING OPPONENTS OF THE INJUSTICES OF THE FRANCO REGIME, AND IT POSSESSES AND EFFECTIVE MONOPOLY ON THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC LABEL, LARGELY DUE TO ITS RECOGNITION BY THE EUROPEAN CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC UNION, WHICH COULD BE OF MORE THAN PASSING ELECTORAL IMPORTANCE. THE EQUIPO'S DEMOCRATIC CREDENTIALS ARE UNASSAILABLE, ITS ORIENTATION IS MODERATE DOMESTICALLY AND BASICALLY PRO-WEST INTERNATIONALLY, AND ITS ELECTORAL PROSPECTS APPEAR RESPECTABLE, THOUGH THEY ARE NOT LIKELY TO BE THE LARGEST SINGLE BLOC IN THE CORTES. EQUIPO LEADERS ARE CERTAIN TO BE IMPORTANT MEMBERS OF SPAIN'S FIRST DEMOCRATICALLY ELECTED PARLIAMENT.

4. CONSEQUENTLY, I RECOMMEND THAT THE DELEGATION BE RECEIVED IN THE DEPARTMENT BY ASSISTANT SECRETARY HARTMAN (THEY EXPECT TO BE IN WASHINGTON FEBRUARY 22, 23 AND PERHAPS 24). I SHOULD ALSO APPRECIATE WHATEVER CAN BE DONE TO ARRANGE OTHER PRODUCTIVE APPOINTMENTS FOR THE GROUP (SUCH AS WITH THE EDITORIAL BOARD OF THE WASHINGTON POST AND/OR NEW YORK TIMES) AND TO ASSIST VENDRELL IN HIS EFFORTS, PARTICULARLY WITH REGARD TO APPOINTMENTS ON THE HILL. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON THE GROUP'S PLANS WILL BE PROVIDED AS AVAILABLE; HOWEVER, VENDRELL IS LIKELY TO BE MORE KNOWLEDGEABLE ABOUT THE DETAILS OF THE VISIT THAN ARE THE

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MEMBERS OF THE DELEGATION. STABLER

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Message Attributes

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